
EOF *Champions*

-2008-

Friday, November 14, 2008
Rutgers, The State University
New Brunswick, NJ

November 14, 2008

Dear Friends and Colleagues:

As we celebrate the 40th anniversary of the Educational Opportunity Fund Program during the 2008-2009 academic year, on behalf of the Educational Opportunity Fund Board of Directors, I am pleased to congratulate the 2008-2009 **EOF CHAMPIONS**. Each individual recognized in this booklet has been a champion at their respective institutions for EOF and the students served by the Fund. The success of EOF and its students is the result of the efforts and support provided by the program and the partnerships it establishes with others on campus who are committed to the spirit and intent of educational opportunity.

This is the eighth year the Board has recognized those campus administrators, faculty, and staff who, while not directly employed by the program, have championed its cause by serving as strong advocates and supporters over the years. On behalf of the Board, we thank this year's **EOF CHAMPIONS** for your commitment to the mission and goals of EOF and, most importantly, for helping our students achieve and realize their educational aspirations.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "J. Avery", written in a cursive style.

James S. Avery
Interim Chairperson
Educational Opportunity Fund
Board of Directors

***NEW JERSEY
EDUCATIONAL OPPORTUNITY FUND
BOARD OF DIRECTORS***

Mr. James Avery

Ms. Geraldine Reed-Brown

Mr. Julio Marengo

Ms. Bussima Mustafa

Mr. Arthur Taylor

Ms. Maria Torres

Dr. Tsang-Bin Tseng

***NEW JERSEY
COMMISSION ON HIGHER EDUCATION***

Mr. Laurence M. Downes
Chairman

Mr. Edward J. Graham
Vice-Chairman

Ms. Jane Oates
Executive Director

Dr. Glenn B. Lang
Executive Director
Educational Opportunity Fund

THE EOF CHAMPION AWARD

The New Jersey Educational Opportunity Fund Board of Directors created the **EOF CHAMPION** award in academic year 2000-2001 to honor non-EOF campus staff who championed the cause of institutional EOF campus programs over the years. Campus EOF programs are asked to nominate one person each year.

An **EOF CHAMPION** is an individual who has:

- ❖ earned the collegial respect and admiration of the campus EOF program director, staff and students;
- ❖ demonstrated his/her dedication, advocacy, outspoken support and general commitment to the spirit and intent of EOF;
- ❖ provided multiple years of effective direct participation with EOF students above and beyond their normal work assignments and responsibilities; and/or
- ❖ developed new program approaches that have “made a difference” or had a significant impact on EOF students.

The **EOF CHAMPIONS** for the 2008-2009 academic year follow.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Atlantic Cape Community College	Dr. Peter Moro	Page 1
Bergen Community College	Professor Melanie Walker	Page 2
Bloomfield College	Mr. Edward Levine	Page 3
Brookdale Community College	Ms. Stephanie Fitzsimmons	Page 4
Caldwell College	Dr. Sandra Duguid	Page 5
Camden County College.....	Professor Lesley Fredericks	Page 6
College of Saint Elizabeth	Dr. Margaret Roman	Page 7
County College of Morris.....	Dr. Bette M. Simmons	Page 8
Drew University	Professor Ebenezer Obiri Addo.....	Page 9
Essex County College	Dean Leigh Bello deCastro	Page 10
FDU-College at Florham.....	Dean Elizabeth Feeley.....	Page 11
FDU-Metropolitan Campus.....	Mr. Michael Kohn	Page 12
Georgian Court College.....	Ms. Barbara Gliwa	Page 13
Hudson County Community College	Dean Jacqueline D. Heads.....	Page 14
Kean University.....	Dr. Ethel Young	Page 15
Middlesex County College	Mrs. Joanne Shurtleff	Page 16
Monmouth University	Mr. Mark Holfelder	Page 17
Montclair State University	Dr. Allyson Straker-Banks	Page 18
New Jersey City University	Ms. Katrina Smith-Younger.....	Page 19
New Jersey Institute of Technology	Mr. Luis Guillen.....	Page 20
Ocean County College.....	Dr. Maysa Abou-Youssef Hayward	Page 21
Ramapo College	Dr. Donald Fucci	Page 22
Raritan Valley Community College	Ms. Rebecca Case	Page 23
Rider University	Mr. Ron Walker	Page 24
Rowan University-Camden	Ms. Shalanda Gray	Page 25

Rutgers University- Camden College of Arts & Sciences.....	Dean Danyelle Thurman	Page 26
Rutgers University- College of Nursing	Dr. Lucille A. Joel.....	Page 27
Rutgers University- Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy	Ms. Barbara Wright.....	Page 28
Rutgers University- Newark College of Arts & Sciences	Ms. Marcia Wilson Brown.....	Page 29
Rutgers University-Office for Diversity & Academic Success in the Sciences.....	Ms. Sharon Welsh	Page 30
Rutgers University- School of Arts & Sciences	Mrs. Lillian S. Riley.....	Page 31
Rutgers University-School of Environmental & Biological Sciences	Ms. Judy Soncrant.....	Page 32
Saint Peter’s College	Dr. Marylou Yam	Page 33
Seton Hall University	Mrs. Brenda Knight.....	Page 34
Seton Hall University- Pre-Medical/Pre-Dental Plus Program.....	Dr. Bryan Terry	Page 35
Stevens Institute of Technology	Dean and Staff of ORL	Page 36
The College of New Jersey.....	Mr. Robert Earl Alston.....	Page 37
The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey.....	Dr. Joseph J. Marchetti.....	Page 38
Union County College.....	Dr. Thomas H. Brown.....	Page 39
University of Medicine & Dentistry- School of Health Related Professions	Professor Narciso Rodriguez.....	Page 40
Warren County Community College.....	Mrs. Rose Lynch	Page 41
William Paterson University	Ms. Diane Ackerman	Page 42

Dr. Peter Mora
Atlantic Cape Community College

The 2008 **EOF CHAMPION** for Atlantic Cape Community College is **Dr. Peter Mora**, President.

Dr. Mora demonstrates his commitment to the mission and goals of the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program through his leadership. His primary focus is to foster student learning by promoting access, excellence and stewardship for all programs and services offered at ACCC, thus comprehensively enhancing student learning with all areas of the college working together to increase student success for all students.

During his thirty-year career in community college education, Dr. Mora has gained an understanding of the student journey, from the students enrolled through the “New Jersey Stars” program to those needing developmental coursework. During his tenure, the college has experienced tremendous growth on all three campuses. Enrollment has increased to over ten percent at the Atlantic City, Charles D. Worthington campus. The building has been remodeled, creating a more welcoming environment for students to learn, and making higher education more accessible to city residents.

His support of the student development staff’s purpose is evident in the recent renovations of the staff’s area at the Mays Landing campus. This remodeling provided a better work environment for staff and the students they serve, and reinforces his commitment to student excellence.

Under the direction of Dr. Mora, the number of scholarships awarded has increased and is expected to continue its growth trend. Dr. Mora also leaves a positive impact on students with his congratulatory messages to graduates and high achievers during the counseling and support services annual awards luncheon.

The EOF staff and students take this opportunity to recognize and thank Dr. Mora for his contributions to the success of the program and congratulate him as the **EOF CHAMPION** for 2008.

Professor Melanie Walker
Bergen Community College

It is with great pleasure that Bergen Community College's EOF staff and students nominate **Professor Melanie Walker** as the **EOF CHAMPION** for 2008. Professor Walker has been associated with the program for approximately four years and has demonstrated her sensitivity to the needs of EOF students by her ability to understand and respond to any difficulty which they may have.

She volunteers her time to offer additional instruction to them on a daily basis. She conducts sessions in which she addresses difficulties students have in math, particularly remedial math. She expresses her concern about EOF students in her class and will offer suggestions for their improvement. She has developed free of cost EOF material/workbooks to assist students to better understand the fundamentals of the coursework. Her commitment and dedication is evident in the significant increase in the number of students who successfully complete the remedial math courses.

Professor Walker is a valued supporter of the EOF community and this acknowledges the students' and staffs' appreciation of her services.

Mr. Edward (Ed) Levine
Bloomfield College

It is with great pleasure that the Bloomfield College Educational Opportunity Fund program nominates **Mr. Edward (Ed) Levine**, faculty member – Learning Resource Center as our **EOF CHAMPION** for 2008. Ed has distinguished himself as an outstanding supporter of the EOF program through his consistent dedication and service to EOF students. Ed has always gone the extra mile, making himself available for tutoring after hours and on weekends. Mr. Levine gained the confidences of the students with his warm, caring, friendly, and professional manner and has taught mathematics for the EOF Summer Program for fifteen years. He is well respected by faculty, staff, and students and is an important asset to the Bloomfield College EOF family.

He is truly an **EOF CHAMPION**.

Ms. Stephanie Fitzsimmons
Brookdale Community College

Ms. Stephanie Fitzsimmons has worked in the field of financial aid for 33 years, and is in her eighth year as the Associate Director of Financial Aid at Brookdale. When our EOF staff discussed Stephanie's contributions to our program and our students it was evident her work is threaded through various aspects of our operations.

Stephanie has helped to establish inter-office procedures which have stream lined office communications allowing EOF staff to better track and follow-up on aid packaging; and she has positively impacted our recruitment and admission of students. With her help, we are now able to identify EOF eligible students in a more efficient and timely manner. There are so many occasions during which Stephanie has come to our aid as we grapple with the challenges our students face as they navigate the financial aid process. Her door is always open, and it is routine for her to ask how she might be able to be of additional assistance to our program.

Stephanie states, "I consider myself lucky to have found a profession that I truly love. Providing access to education for those that may not have an opportunity if it were not for the work of financial aid professionals is very important to me! There is not a day that goes by that I do not feel challenged and rewarded for the work that I do!"

Stephanie's comments reveal a sense of inner-peace and satisfaction with the service profession she has chosen and the ability to impact in a positive way the lives of our students as they work towards building a better life for themselves and moving their dreams to a state of reality. We recognize the power of her words as each and every day we witness the dedication she gives to empowering our students to successfully take the small steps which ultimately lead to establishing a financial foundation for college success, and which underscore the importance of asking questions, seeking assistance, and taking responsibility for one's own future.

It is clear to us that our providing Stephanie the recognition as an **EOF CHAMPION** is but a small way to say thank you for all that she has done for our program, staff, and students.

Dr. Sandra Duguid
Caldwell College

Caldwell College EOF Program has proudly selected Dr. Sandra Duguid, Assistant Director for the Academic Support Center, for the **EOF CHAMPION** award, 2008.

Dr. Duguid has been an outstanding supporter of the EOF program during her tenure at Caldwell College. For over five years, she has worked as a full-time English professor and English tutor. She is a well-known poet on campus and a mentor to students who share the same talent. In addition, she is one of the committed faculty members of the EOF Summer Program. Her consistent involvement in the summer program gives her valid insights on how to strengthen students' writing skills to meet the challenges of the academic year. Furthermore, as a result of her interaction with the students, she communicates to our staff the learning needs and challenges that our students are facing. Her contributions and recommendations are imperative as we develop fall semester class schedules for the incoming EOF freshman. She is a strong advocate on behalf of those students who she does not believe need to be placed in remedial English classes.

Dr. Duguid takes time to get to know program students on a personal and academic level. Her understanding and kindness to help strengthen the EOF program and her honest connection with the students is remarkable. She participates and supports all EOF activities and programming. Dr. Duguid is a true champion and she embraces the spirit of the program with enthusiasm. She is well respected and greatly appreciated by the EOF staff, the college campus and, most of all, the students.

Professor Lesley Fredericks
Camden County College

Lesley Fredericks has been a member of the Academic Skills Reading/Writing Department at Camden County College since 2000. Since 2002, she has been the Academic Coordinator for the college's "Community Gateway Program," which provides Adult Basic Education and GED preparation courses at locations throughout the City of Camden. Professor Fredericks was chosen as this year's **EOF CHAMPION** because of her dedication and commitment to educate the students of Camden County College, particularly EOF students. Working with students in the EOF program is a pleasure for her because of her belief that the more support students have, and the more positive relationships they can build, the better their chance will be to use their potential to succeed. After teaching a reading course over the summer to a group of first-time EOF students, Professor Fredericks told them and the EOF staff, that it was classes like theirs that made her truly love her job. Professor Fredericks has been involved with adult education for over twenty years, and her work at Camden County College remains rooted in her passion for working with adult learners, particularly those with significant educational challenges.

Dr. Margaret Roman
College of Saint Elizabeth

The Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) program at the College of Saint Elizabeth (CSE) is proud to nominate Dr. Margaret Roman for the 2008 **EOF CHAMPION** award. Dr. Roman's teaching career started in Newark in 1971 at Saint Ann School as a Language Arts Coordinator, and she has remained a constant presence at CSE since 1987.

During her tenure at CSE, Dr. Roman received many awards and honors. Over the years, her teaching career has provided her with opportunities to travel, write, and present papers in her area of expertise. However, it is Dr. Roman's dedication to her students that compels us to choose her as the 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. Her work on campus, in and outside of the classroom, has earned her the respect and admiration of the students and staff of the EOF program. Dr. Roman has positively influenced many EOF students to apply to the Honors Program. She actively seeks out students who she knows can earn and maintain the qualifying GPA of 3.5 required for participation. Students often describe her as an intellectual and sympathetic person; intellectual because of her willingness to promote an inclusive set of courses where students can explore issues of gender, race, class, culture, and sexuality in a safe and nurturing classroom environment; and sympathetic because she is never too busy to listen and offer a word of encouragement. Dr. Roman is an avid supporter of the goals and mission of the program. The words we would use to describe her are advocate and role model. Advocate because she goes beyond her call of duty to ensure students' success and role model because she typifies what it means to belong to a caring, learning environment.

It therefore gives us great pleasure to submit this nomination for 2008 **EOF CHAMPION** on behalf of Dr. Margaret Roman.

Dr. Bette M. Simmons
County College of Morris

The County College of Morris wishes to honor and thank Dr. Bette M. Simmons, Vice President of Student Development & Enrollment Management, as the 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. Since joining the CCM academic community in 1980 as a counselor, Dr. Simmons has, at all levels of her career, been involved with supporting the EOF Program and its students. Engagement in recruitment, retention initiatives, counseling and advisement, transfer services and participation in program activities of the Educational Opportunity Fund have been part of her commitment to student success.

Dr. Simmons continues to work collaboratively with EOF through the Division of Academic Affairs to encourage enhancement of support structures to provide additional assistance to student learners who face the challenges of basic skills development and other obstacles that impact the institution's high risk students.

Her commitment to the EOF students expanded with her appointment to the EOF Community Advisory Board in 1982. Despite the increase in professional responsibilities, she continues to serve in that capacity. Her participation over these many years has facilitated programmatic and strategic developments that supported the implementation of procedures and practices that help ensure student retention and persistence. In turn, students were able to maintain focus on their academic progress toward their educational goals.

Finally, Dr. Simmons' insight and advice to the EOF staff ranges from interacting with them regarding specific student issues to being instrumental in making sure EOF staff are included in professional development programs that would enhance staff knowledge of critical issues impacting students. Her interest in maintaining the professionalism of the staff is driven by her compassion for the success of all the EOF student population.

The entire EOF staff and students thank Dr. Simmons for her involvement and contributions at all levels. Her energy is unbounded. In the wee small hours of the morning to the wee small hours of the night, Dr. Bette Simmons is on call to respond with reassuring and thoughtful leadership. She has been a key figure in the history of the EOF Program at the County College of Morris.

Professor Ebenezer Obiri Addo
Drew University

The Educational Opportunity Scholars program at Drew University is pleased to nominate Professor Ebenezer Obiri Addo as the **EOF CHAMPION** for 2008. Professor Addo has been affiliated with the EOF program since 1993. As the Chaplain for the Pan-African students (2003-2005) he worked closely with EOS to recruit and welcome students to the university. He has counseled many of our students, particularly the males often holding small group sessions focusing on decision-making and identity. He has recognized the need to help them in their adjustment to college and to make positive life choices. His passion has been advising freshmen to make tangible choices that would ease their transition from high school into college. Furthermore, Professor Addo has encouraged students to pursue learning opportunities that expand their self-concept and give deep pride and healthy self-esteem. It is our honor to recognize Professor Addo for his continued dedication to the work of this program.

Dean Leigh Bello deCastro
Essex County College

Leigh Bello deCastro, Assistant Dean of Academic Foundations, Director of the Learning Center and the Center for Academic Foundations, and several other new initiatives at Essex County College (ECC), typifies the best of what the college has to offer. She is down to earth, innovative, and industrious – all with her inevitable sense of humor. Whether speaking with venerable professors or boisterous high schoolers, she is welcoming and knowledgeable. With Dean Leigh, you are bound to get what you need - and then some! She is one of the program’s top “go to” leaders and the students and staff are happy to have this opportunity to honor Dean Leigh Bello deCastro as Essex County College’s **EOF CHAMPION**.

Dean Elizabeth Feeley
Fairleigh Dickinson University - College at Florham Campus

The EOF program at Fairleigh Dickinson University – College at Florham is honored to nominate Dean Elizabeth Feeley, Associate Dean of Student Services of the Maxwell Becton College of Arts and Sciences, as our **EOF CHAMPION**.

Dean Feeley has a long and distinguished record of scholarship and service to the university and to the EOF program. Dean Feeley has served the university with distinction for over forty years. Dean Feeley has been a tenured Professor of Physical Education and Health since 1966. Over the years, she has served the university in a variety of capacities: Director of Academic Advising, Department Chair of Physical Education and Health, Assistant Dean of Becton College, and Head Coach for Swimming, Tennis and Field Hockey.

During her years of service, Dean Feeley has fostered the following initiatives: creation of the Madison campus basic skills program; development and supervision of the Madison campus Success Program; initiation of articulation agreements between the university and community colleges; implementation of a comprehensive academic advising procedures manual and academic standards review committee for the college.

Dean Feeley has been a true champion and loyal friend to the EOF program. During her tenure, she has been a dynamic and supportive presence both academically and socially. She has served on numerous committees and task forces, working to strengthen the mission of the university and the quality of campus life for EOF students. Dean Feeley leads by example. Whenever the program or the students call on her for her expertise and support, she can always be counted on to help. For her contributions in the classroom and administratively, Dean Feeley was named Outstanding Educator of the Year by the EOF program. She has provided responsive academic counseling, support and advocacy for program students, participated in the EOF Summer Program, presented workshops to benefit the students, and has consistently attended and participated in many EOF program sponsored events. Dean Feeley continues to provide tangible support and to prioritize the EOF program needs. Dean Feeley has demonstrated a dedicated commitment to the EOF program in ways too numerous to mention.

Mr. Michael Kohn
Fairleigh Dickinson University - Metropolitan Campus

Michael Kohn, Assistant Director of the Center for Academic Student Services (CASS), truly embodies the essence of an **EOF CHAMPION**. Michael began his career at Fairleigh Dickinson University in 2002 as a tutor for EOF and the former Academic Resource Center, now CASS. After four years as a tutor, he advanced to adjunct professor, specializing in basic skills education.

His dedication to the EOF program and to EOF students is clearly visible by his actions. He goes above and beyond the call of duty to meet the needs of the EOF students. Despite his responsibilities as Assistant Director and adjunct professor, Michael continues to offer his tutorial services to EOF students. Michael is always flexible and accommodating in his schedule and is dedicated to providing the EOF students with the academic support they need to be successful. Michael understands the importance of skills building in order to continue the learning process with a strong and solid foundation. He is instrumental in facilitating the learning process of students, as he regularly assists EOF students in developing their reading and English skills. He is also very involved with EOF basic skills testing administration and oversight of pre- and post-testing. Michael willingly adjusts his schedule when possible to accommodate EOF testing. He has been known to arrive at least one hour earlier than his start time to make sure everything is organized and ready for testing. He is also frequently called upon to provide guidance regarding the placement level of freshmen students.

Michael has consistently demonstrated outstanding dedication and commitment to the EOF program. He works well with the EOF students and truly believes in them. He values and supports the mission and goals of the EOF program. His continuous support of the program and never ending encouragement of the students, has earned him the respect and admiration of the EOF students and staff. For these reasons, the EOF program of Fairleigh Dickinson University – Metropolitan Campus, nominates Michael Kohn as our **EOF CHAMPION**.

Ms. Barbara Gliwa
Georgian Court University

Barbara Gliwa, Vice President for Finance and Administration and a member of the President's administrative team, has been a supporter of the EOF program and its students for the past six years. Upon the recommendation of the Vice President for Enrollment Management, Financial Aid Officer, and EOF Director, she approved increases in the institutional EOF student financial aid award to reflect the increase in tuition and fees for our freshmen and sophomores. More recently, under her stewardship, funding for all resident EOF students was extended from two years to five (if needed), resulting in EOF students receiving generous institutional financial aid funding, which includes funds to cover the cost of their textbooks for four semesters, college work study, and a subsidized student loan. She is always open and willing to discuss subjects pertaining to the program and its needs. We have a real friend and advocate in Ms. Gliwa and her staff and we are happy to nominate her as our **EOF CHAMPION**.

Dean Jacqueline D. Heads
Hudson County Community College

Jacqueline Heads became Associate Dean for Student Services at Hudson County Community College in October of 2006. Dean Heads came to HCCC with extensive knowledge about, and experience with, the EOF program. She is an EOF alum from Mercer County Community College and Rider University. Upon graduation, she served as a graduate assistant for EOF at Rider and eventually became a full-time EOF counselor there. During her professional career, she was also an EOF counselor for the Rutgers University School of Pharmacy EOF program.

As Associate Dean for Student Services, Dean Heads has been tremendously supportive of the EOF program since the day she began at Hudson County Community College. As the dean, she always advocates for the needs of EOF students and the program. She always attends EOF student events and presented a workshop for female summer program students. Without question, her vast experiences in EOF and her thoughtful, caring, and professional demeanor have made her an inspiration, role model, and **EOF CHAMPION** to both students and staff of the EOF program at Hudson County Community College.

Dr. Ethel Young
Kean University

Kean University's **EOF CHAMPION** is Dr. Ethel Young, Professor, Communication Sciences & Educational Services Department, and former Associate Dean for the College of Education. Dr. Young has demonstrated exemplary support and service to the students and staff of the Kean University Exceptional Educational Opportunities program for over 20 years.

As a former Associate Dean, Dr. Young was always very supportive of EEO students through the caring manner in which she connected with them and provided each with the timely and pertinent information needed to successfully navigate their education major and earn their B.A. degree. Furthermore, Dr. Young has generously shared her expertise and helped thousands of EEO students improve their skills in reading over the last 20 years as an enthusiastic instructor of the EEO reading improvement class (CS 1501). She has also taught numerous EEO students within the Education department and has been the speaker at the EEO program's honors list receptions and Epsilon Epsilon Omega Honor Society induction ceremonies for most of the 20 years that she has been associated with the Kean University EEO program.

Dr. Young has also participated in the EEO annual Pre-Freshman Summer Orientation programs for more than 15 years. She has assisted numerous EEO students as a mentor and has never hesitated to offer guidance for EEO students as a professional field supervisor for the senior seminar/teacher practicum course.

In addition, Dr. Young has participated in most of the EEO programs' annual graduating senior awards dinner/banquet ceremonies, as well as the pre-freshman summer awards programs, during her tenure at Kean University. Dr. Young exhibits a welcoming and kind spirit to all whom she encounters. Her pleasant disposition has been evident across our diverse community.

Mrs. Joanne Shurtleff
Middlesex County College

It is with great pleasure that the Middlesex County College Educational Opportunity Fund program nominates Mrs. Joanne Shurtleff as our **EOF CHAMPION**. In her position as Director of Enrollment Services, Mrs. Shurtleff has been an invaluable resource to the EOF program and its participants. Mrs. Shurtleff personally ensures that EOF participants who receive a summer grant are registered in a timely manner. She assists the department in resolving registration and compliance issues. Mrs. Shurtleff has also provided registration training for the department, assistance with compiling report data and has been a true friend to the program.

Joanne began her career at Middlesex County College as a Student Records Evaluator, transferring credits and overseeing students' graduation. In her current position as Director of Enrollment Services, her primary responsibility is to oversee the college's registration process. While this involves maintaining the "nuts and bolts" of the system, it is those opportunities to work directly with students that provide her with the most satisfaction. Her goal is to reduce hurdles and solve problems to make the registration process as smooth and simple as possible. She works frequently with the First Year Experience Coordinator to assist new students in their transition from high school to college and serves as the Registrar's Office representative on the New Student Orientation Committee. As the school certifying official for Middlesex County College's veterans, she has the privilege to work as the liaison between Middlesex veterans from all branches of the armed services and the Veterans Administration, as well as with Middlesex students who are members of the New Jersey National Guard. She is also a member of the New Jersey Association of Veterans' Program Administrators (NJAVPA). We salute her as our **EOF CHAMPION**.

Mr. Mark Holfelder
Monmouth University

The staff and students of Monmouth University's Educational Opportunity Fund program are honored to recognize **Mr. Mark Holfelder** as our 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. In his position as Associate Director of Residential Life, Mark has consistently fostered and encouraged a cooperative and supportive working relationship between the offices of Residential Life and EOF, going so far as to maintain daily contact between offices. He has proven time and again to be a strong advocate for EOF students' success.

EOF freshmen make their first acquaintance with Mark during their summer program when he presents a workshop on dorm life. Because of his warm and approachable manner, he immediately becomes known and respected as a friend and ally. Mark can always be counted upon to lend a listening ear, assist with problem solving, and encourage students' growth and maturity as citizens of the Monmouth University community. Mark is instrumental in training EOF summer peer counselors. He is a huge advocate for EOF students becoming Resident Assistants and Head Resident Assistants and has never turned down an invitation to show his support for the EOF program's initiatives. Mark is a familiar face and avid cheerleader for EOF events such as Salsa Night, summer program banquets and senior celebrations.

Mark is a valued colleague and welcome friend of both EOF staff and students. We salute and applaud him as this year's **EOF CHAMPION**.

Dr. Allyson Straker-Banks
Montclair State University

From her first day on campus in 2005, the Educational Opportunity Fund Program gained a valued advocate and cheerleader in Associate Dean of Student Academic Services, Dr. Allyson Straker-Banks. Dr. Straker-Banks supervises the university's student academic support areas that include academic advising, tutoring, placement testing, freshman orientation and first year studies, and the Educational Opportunity Fund program. Coming from New York where she began her career in higher education in an opportunity program, she has consistently demonstrated an affinity for the EOF. She truly understands and promotes the EOF mission and recognizes the trailblazing role of opportunity programs and their implications for basic skills and developmental education for higher education. She truly represents a generation of opportunity program administrators who have gained broad campus experience, gone on to acquire advanced degrees, expanded their area of administrative responsibilities beyond opportunity programs, and now serve as mentors for other professionals.

Dr. Straker-Banks acknowledges EOF as a program that delivers holistic services to students and recognizes program staff as expert practitioners in student outreach and intrusive counseling, and academic advising in interdepartmental meetings. She points to EOF program successes in improving retention and graduation rates during this decade. She references EOF freshman summer program models for developing developmental course instruction and tutoring, and in designing and implementing campus-wide pilot programs, especially during this period when our campus is changing its paradigm for developmental course placement and instruction. Both EOF students and staff appreciate her public recognition of their competitive and sometimes even superior performance outcomes. She finds ways to show her appreciation to EOF staff for their dedication and success working with their student-clients. She is always a welcome guest and contributor at staff training sessions. Dr. Straker-Banks recently recommended the EOF staff to our vice president for a department award for teamwork. Above and beyond her official responsibility to represent the program, she is a champion in the true sense of the word. She fights for resources for the program in these fiscally austere times. A strong negotiator and veteran administrator, she has proven herself time and time again to be a trusted friend and ally by successfully representing the interests of EOF students and staff and communicating the EOF story around campus. We love and respect the professionalism, sense of purpose, and personal warmth of Allyson Straker-Banks.

Ms. Katrina Smith-Younger
New Jersey City University

The EOF/Opportunity Scholarship Program staff and students at New Jersey City University nominate **Ms. Katrina Smith-Younger** for the 2008 **EOF CHAMPION** award. Katrina has worked for the university for 18 years, 12 of which have been as a member of the Financial Aid Office staff. Katrina works with all of our initial year, transfer, and graduate applicants to determine their eligibility for the program. She is also the university's liaison with the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education/EOF Central Office for all matters related to student grants. She has and continues to play a very vital role in assisting both our students and staff through the students' financial aid process. Her patient manner and her diligence to the OSP students play an integral part in our students' success.

Mr. Luis Guillen
New Jersey Institute of Technology

The New Jersey Institute of Technology, Educational Opportunity Fund program, is pleased to select Mr. Luis Guillen as our 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. Mr. Guillen is the Security System Operator for NJIT Security System Department. He received his Bachelor's degree in Professional and Technical Communication from NJIT and an Associate degree in Architecture Technology, as well as a Certificate in Computer Aided Design from Essex County College. Most important, Luis is an EOP alumnus from both institutions.

Over the years, Luis has been critical to the success of EOP. Since his first semester at NJIT, Luis was a student worker in the Security System Department; in 1998, he was hired as a full time employee at NJIT.

In his current position, Mr. Guillen is the liaison between the EOP Summer Academic Enrichment Program and the Security System Department. He is our "point of contact" for all issues related to student IDs and, on many occasions, he has executed missions after his regular work hours in order to assist the EOP students.

Overall, Luis continues to be a great supporter of the Educational Opportunity program and its mission. EOP is proud to nominate him as our **EOF CHAMPION**.

Dr. Maysa Abou-Youssef Hayward
Ocean County College

Ocean County College is pleased to nominate **Dr. Maysa Abou-Youssef Hayward** as the Educational Opportunity Fund (EOF) **CHAMPION** for 2008. While “LOVE” may seem an odd way to tell you about Maysa, love is indeed the one word that captures all that she is and all that she gives to EOF and the many students of OCC. She is fearless in sharing her gift of love, passionate about learning, and how learning and awakening unfolds for each student. Maysa is patient, kind, curious, and steadfast in her belief regarding who we work for - students; she is truly a champion, a lioness, and relentless in her support and guidance.

Maysa has worked for several summers as a faculty member for our Summer Institute for incoming first year EOF students. Her English mini course gives students an introduction to college English. Her instructional approach is characterized by enthusiasm and care. Her love of literature and understanding is contagious. Typically, students who have not yet registered for fall classes make sure that they have correctly noted her name to select an English section that she teaches. Those sections usually fill early, even the evening ones.

She is wise and wonderful, and believes in the potential of every student regardless of their personal history or academic preparation. “*Yes you can!*” is her call and cheer to each and every student. She annually hosts *Maysa’s Picnic* and opens her house to every student that she has taught that semester. An avid cook, she enjoys preparing food and sharing her home. Maysa is generous in spirit and in giving the most precious of gifts, the gift of herself. We are all indeed richer for having shared in her space and her light.

As a role model, Maysa sets the example of excellence, confidence, and possibilities. She is the **EOF CHAMPION** from Ocean County College for 2008!

Dr. Donald Fucci
Ramapo College

The EOF staff at Ramapo College of New Jersey proudly selects **Dr. Donald Fucci** as our 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. Dr. Fucci has been an ardent supporter of the EOF program here at Ramapo College for many years. As the former Dean of the Division of Basic Studies, Dr. Fucci was instrumental in helping to develop, support, and implement the delivery of both instruction and instructional support to our students. After leaving the position of Dean, Dr. Fucci has continued to serve as a writing convener and professor during the EOF summer program. The program has come to rely on Don for the insight he provides in the area of developmental education.

Dr. Fucci is a true champion of the EOF program here at Ramapo.

Ms. Rebecca Case
Raritan Valley Community College

The Raritan Valley Community College EOF program nominates **Rebecca Case** for the **EOF CHAMPION** award. Rebecca Case has been an academic recruiter at RVCC for the past 2 ½ years. Rebecca recruits for the overall college (not one specific area) and she is always promoting the EOF program to potential new students. She has sent countless students our way. We often accompany Rebecca on her high school visits to meet with potential new students. Rebecca is an incredible recruiter. She has the ability to reach out to students who may be undecided about going to college. She is able to draw them in and makes a wonderful and lasting impression on them. As we know, the first steps to college can be the most challenging and Rebecca makes that process easier. As a graduate of RVCC, she knows firsthand the challenges that can arise through the admissions process. Even after she has referred the EOF students to us, they continue to seek her out and stay connected because she remains a mentor to them. She, like the EOF staff, truly believes in these students and it shows in her dedication. She genuinely cares about students and helps them to succeed. The EOF staff greatly appreciates all the hard work she puts into recruiting new students. She is a tremendous asset to the EOF program as well as RVCC.

Mr. Ron Walker
Rider University

The Rider University Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) nominates **Ron Walker** as our 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. Ron Walker joined the Rider University community in 1991 as the Assistant to the Vice President of Academic Affairs/Provost. In that role he played a part in coordinating academic assessment for EOP, research analysis and EOP budgetary matters. In 1996, he was promoted to Associate Vice President of Institutional Analysis, a senior staff position reporting directly to the President and a member of the Presidential cabinet.

His duties expanded to include the creation, development, and operation of the Office of Institutional Research and Analysis. His office provides extensive survey administration/analysis, statistical modeling, and presentations to diverse audiences to support the college admissions and financial aid processes, student satisfaction and retention, outcomes assessment, and institutional peer benchmarking.

In both capacities, Ron has been a consistent supporter, advocate, and personal colleague to the Educational Opportunity Program. He has continued to support and consult on all EOP and diverse population policies. He has had a positive impact on EOP for a number of years and the program is very fortunate to have an individual like Ron in its corner.

Ms. Shalanda Gray
Rowan University – Camden

It is with great honor that the EOF staff at Rowan University at Camden nominates **Ms. Shalanda Gray** for the 2008 **EOF CHAMPION** award. Ms. Gray has worked at Rowan University at Camden for the past seven years. During this time, Ms. Gray has worked as an instructor for our summer EOF Computer Literacy course and has served as a member of our summer program planning committee. Aside from her summer responsibilities, Ms. Gray serves as a mentor to many of our female EOF students and often goes beyond the scope of her job duties to assist EOF students in many capacities. In addition, professionally, Ms. Gray has helped to create and provide work opportunities for many EOF students in the department of Instructional Technology.

Ms. Gray is a catalyst for change and a woman respected by both her peers and students. She is a strong advocate for EOF and its students.

Dean Danyelle Thurman
Rutgers University - Camden College of Arts & Sciences

The EOF program at Rutgers University - Camden College of Arts & Sciences is delighted to advance the nomination of **Danyelle Thurman**, MSW, Assistant Dean, for the **EOF CHAMPION** 2008 award. In her capacity as Assistant Dean, Danyelle has routinely provided administrative support and expertise to the EOF program on a variety of projects and initiatives. Danyelle holds a B.A. and M.S.W. from Rutgers-New Brunswick, and has been a superlative ambassador for the program and campus. Throughout her career in the Office of Advising, she has directly supported the work of the EOF program by serving as the primary liaison between the program and the Office of Advising. More importantly, Danyelle has also provided support to individual EOF counselors and students in shaping the mission and vision of the program through her consultative advice and expertise. As a professional dedicated to the mission and vision of EOF, she has steadfastly worked with her colleagues across the campus to advocate for students whose academic potential would be best served by the program and the support services offered via EOF.

Dr. Lucille A. Joel
Rutgers University - College of Nursing

The Rutgers University – College of Nursing is privileged and honored to nominate **Dr. Lucille A. Joel** as our **EOF CHAMPION**. Dr. Joel is the Interim Dean at the College of Nursing on the Newark Campus of Rutgers University. Dr. Joel provides the department with continuous support to our students.

In her role as Interim Dean, she greeted students, parents, and family members at our Family Orientation Day. Dr. Joel came in on a holiday weekend to personally greet our students. In the history of the EOF summer program, she was the first Dean to come to this event. When she spoke to the audience, she related her own personal story of being a first generation college student working her way through college to earn her degrees. She alleviated the anxiety of the parents when she shared how she raised eight children and they are all college graduates. Dr. Joel was able to accomplish this while working full time and attending graduate school. She gave an overview of the nursing profession and encouraged our students to do their best. Dr. Joel's presentation was inspirational and many of the students have indicated that she motivated them and made them believe that, if they worked hard, the sky was the limit for them. Dr. Joel set the tone for the summer program. She had the students believing that they are fantastic and now these initial students are known as the "Fantastic Fifteen". Each student went on to finish the summer program with stellar grades and they are now on their way to become excellent nurses.

Dean Joel also attended and addressed the students at the fall semester welcome back reception. She advised them not to remain separated from the general student population. Dr. Joel encouraged the students to integrate with others—to mingle, join and embrace the members of the College of Nursing community and not to stay aloof. She strongly advised them to do this because once they were in the workforce they will need to interact with everyone.

Additionally, Dr. Joel is an outstanding professor and author. Her text is used in the ***Trends in Nursing*** course and it is the cornerstone of the coursework for the first year curriculum. Students often share with their classmates that she is a fair, no nonsense professor. It is widely known that Dr. Joel will go out of her way to assist a student. The students know that they must come prepared to her class and she expects nothing but their absolute best and, because she demands it, they in turn give her their best work.

As an administrator, she is supportive of EOF. She makes herself available to staff. Through her strong advocacy for the EOF program, Rutgers University is now revisiting a critical matter of budget accountability for EOF Directors.

Finally, Dr. Joel recognizes the value of EOF. She knows that EOF makes a difference for minority and first generation students. Dr. Joel is truly a champion for EOF. She gives her time, support, and encouragement to our students, program faculty and staff, and richly deserves recognition for her efforts to promote the EOF program.

Ms. Barbara Wright
Rutgers University - Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy

The Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy nominates **Ms. Barbara Wright**, from the Office of Undergraduate Admissions, as our 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. Ms. Wright has gone above and beyond her duties and responsibilities to make herself available to our EOF program whenever necessary. Ms. Wright has provided constant and unwavering support of the Pharmacy EOF program since its inception. She has always ensured that the recruitment initiatives put forth by the Office of Undergraduate Admission include programs and events that will attract and encourage prospective EOF students. Moreover, whenever there are University wide recruitment activities, Ms. Wright always makes it a point to include members of the EOF community, whether it is students and/or staff, to be a part of a committee or event. Additionally, she always makes sure that whatever recommendations or policies are initiated by the Undergraduate Admissions Office, they are inclusive of the EOF community. Ms. Wright is, and continues to be, committed to the mission, goals and purpose of EOF. For this and the reasons outlined above, Ms. Barbara Wright is the Ernest Mario School of Pharmacy's 2008 **EOF CHAMPION** nominee.

Ms. Marcia Wilson Brown, Esq.
Rutgers University – Newark College of Arts & Sciences

The Rutgers University – Newark College of Arts and Sciences is pleased to recognize **Marcia Wilson Brown, Esq.**, as our **EOF CHAMPION**. Marcia Wilson Brown is the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs and Community Outreach on the Newark campus. While her role encompasses many aspects of campus and community life, she has always shown a love for the EOF program.

Over the years, Vice-Chancellor Brown has interacted with EOF students in a myriad of ways in her roles as Vice Chancellor, Provost, mentor, and friend. She has always gone above and beyond the call of duty to demonstrate her support and commitment to the EOF program by providing advocacy, advisement, financial support and encouragement. Chancellor Brown is compassionate, an active listener, and a visionary. She has worked tirelessly to create partnerships and ensure a spirit of collegiality and synergy across all student support programs on campus. Her talent for bringing people together, who had previously worked in silos, has translated into a tremendous number of readily available resources that have contributed directly to the success of EOF students.

Vice-Chancellor Brown has designed and implemented initiatives that expose EOF eligible high school students to the opportunities available to them on the Rutgers-Newark campus, thus creating a pipeline of students for EOF. She has also been able to solicit funding from a private donor to cover room and board costs for 10 – 12 EOF students annually. The students selected have been students who have expressed a desire to live on campus but lacked the funding to do so. The MCJ Housing Scholarship, the first of its kind, has allowed EOF students to fully enjoy campus life, fully immerse themselves into residential learning communities, and remain fully focused on their educational pursuits. Vice-Chancellor Brown consistently provides the EOF program with timely notification of events that benefit our students and she has collaborated with the program on some particularly challenging issues, which without her input, sage advice and support, may not have turned out as favorably for our students.

It is for all the reasons identified and others too lengthy to enumerate, that the Rutgers-Newark EOF program takes this opportunity to recognize the Vice Chancellor as our **EOF CHAMPION**.

Ms. Sharon Welsh
Rutgers University
Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences

The Rutgers University Office for Diversity and Academic Success in the Sciences (ODASIS) program is pleased to nominate **Ms. Sharon Welsh** as a 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. Ms. Welsh serves as the Manager of Student Employment at Rutgers University and is an invaluable asset to ODASIS. Sharon plays a vital role as the steering hand behind the coordination and management of all work-study students at ODASIS. This semester alone, Ms. Welsh matched 18 work-study students to ODASIS' needs and is effectively coordinating their work-schedules and payroll. The work-study students, who provide crucial assistance to the ODASIS programs and to the daily functions of the office, have been smoothly integrated into their positions thanks to Ms. Welsh's efforts.

Ms. Welsh is a reliable and affable colleague, whose work ethic and professionalism are markers of her diligent character, while her dedication and consistency reflect her genuine commitment to all students. It is for these reasons and more that the director and staff highly recommend Ms. Sharon Welsh for a 2008 **EOF CHAMPION** award.

Mrs. Lillian S. Riley
Rutgers University - School of Arts and Sciences

Mrs. Lillian S. Riley, an Assistant Manager of Financial Aid at Rutgers, the State University, for the New Brunswick region, has been a financial aid administrator for over 34 years. Her initial employment in the profession began at the University of Missouri at Rolla. Mrs. Riley, an ardent supporter of education, has shared a close working relationship with the Rutgers' EOF community for 27 years.

She has used her expertise and extensive knowledge of financing higher education to assist students and families in understanding, navigating, and managing the financial aid process. Her advocacy involves assisting first generation, low-income students and their families through outreach presentations and individual sessions. These endeavors are informative, comprehensive, and vibrant which serves in advancing their financial aid literacy. The Rutgers EOF staff consults with her about complicated student financial aid problems and she tirelessly makes herself available to resolve those issues, which enable students to continue their education.

Mrs. Riley's contributions to college bound students extend beyond her employment. She is involved in community and civic service. She is a member of her church's Education Club, an executive board member of a local scholarship organization, and a partner to the education committee of a national sorority. She currently serves as the co-chair for the Central New Jersey site for "College Goal Sunday."

Mrs. Riley's dedication and passion for what she does has made a tremendous and enduring impact on EOF students and the Rutgers community. She truly is an **EOF CHAMPION**.

Ms. Judy Soncrant
Rutgers University
School of Environmental and Biological Sciences

The Office of Special Programs at Rutgers University School of Environmental and Biological Sciences nominates **Ms. Judy Soncrant** of the Division of Computing Services as the 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. For many years, the EOF programs at Rutgers University experienced difficulty in identifying EOF students within the university-wide data base. The solution to this taxing situation required comprehensive support from a professional knowledgeable about the existing system. Both the database coding definitions and the computer screens allowing update of the information would need modifications to permit access to facilitate the data needs for EOF. These modifications to the university's Student Records Database for EOF reporting purposes received substantial and committed support from the Division of Computing Services. The leadership in this effort came from Judy Soncrant. With her guidance throughout the project, many dead ends and pitfalls were avoided in the development of the revised system.

Ms. Soncrant next turned her attention to the generation of data for the EOF Annual Report's Table 11 from the university database. Ms. Soncrant cooperated with EOF staff in revising the report parameters and in identifying and correcting those elements of the problem which were computer-originated, and those which were data maintenance errors that EOF staff could rectify with the aid of the maintenance screens she developed.

As a direct result of her attention and perseverance as the project manager to the task at hand, the Rutgers EOF programs can now access and provide up-to-date and accurate information on the EOF student population at the University, both in annual reports to the Commission on Higher Education and in their day-to-day work with students. Ms. Soncrant is eminently deserving of recognition on this 40th Anniversary of the Educational Opportunity Program.

Dr. Marylou Yam
Saint Peter's College

The Saint Peter's College Educational Opportunity Fund program nominates **Dr. Marylou Yam** as our 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. Dr. Yam arrived at Saint Peter's College in 1989 as an instructor in the Nursing Department and quickly rose to the position of Academic Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences and School of Business Administration in 2006. During this period, she was responsible for overseeing the Educational Opportunity Fund program. In 2008, Dr. Yam was appointed Vice President for Academic Affairs.

Dr. Yam has been recognized as a true friend of the EOF family. She is truly an advocate for opportunity programs such as EOF and in ensuring that all students have access to higher education. In her present role, she still finds the time to attend and speak at program activities recognizing students' academic success.

We are most fortunate to have the honor of recognizing Dr. Yam as our **EOF CHAMPION**. She is a woman committed to the democracy of opportunity for all and a woman of accomplishment who has earned our love and respect.

Mrs. Brenda Knight
Seton Hall University

The Seton Hall University Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) selects **Ms. Brenda Knight** as our 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. Mrs. Knight, throughout her tenure at Seton Hall University (SHU), has continuously supported the mission, goals, students, and staff of the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP). She challenges students to excel both academically and personally and she constantly reminds them of their responsibility to give back to their communities in a variety of ways. She fosters an understanding and appreciation of diverse worldviews and she encourages leadership development in students. Mrs. Knight serves as advisor to the National Council of Negro Women, Imani Chapter, founded by EOP students on SHU's campus, and she continues to mentor other EOP students in a number of other venues.

Dr. Bryan Terry
Seton Hall University Pre-Medical/Pre-Dental Plus Program

For the past few years, **Dr. Bryan Terry** has played an integral role in the support of both the Pre-Medical/Pre-Dental Plus Program and the Educational Opportunity Program at Seton Hall University. Currently, he serves as the Associate Vice President of Enrollment Services. While his position does not allow him the time to be as closely involved in the academic or social development of many EOF students, his awareness of the students' needs has helped many afford the cost of attendance at the university. As a result of Dr. Terry's commitment and dedication, many of the students from the Pre-Medical/Pre-Dental Plus Program have had the opportunity to achieve their dreams of attending Seton Hall and becoming future healthcare professionals. To this end, we would like to honor Dr. Terry and say thanks for his continued support of all the EOF students at Seton Hall University, by nominating him as a 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**

The Dean and Staff of the Office of Residence Life Stevens Institute of Technology

We at Stevens Institute of Technology are pleased to nominate **the Dean and staff of the Office of Residence Life (ORL)** to be recognized as our 2008 **EOF CHAMPIONS**. The ORL staff has the daunting task of meeting the residential and dining needs of undergraduates, while upholding Stevens' policy of guaranteed housing for the duration of a student's undergraduate academic career at the institution. Additionally, the ORL staff promotes a home-like environment within the residence halls, provides a wide array of activities to support the students, and manages one arm of the disciplinary process.

Recognizing the financial hardships EOF students' experience, and appreciating our relationship with and commitment to our students, the ORL staff consistently supports our efforts. For example, each year the ORL staff requests the names of our incoming freshmen and waives the \$300 housing deposit required from students requesting housing for the academic year. Furthermore, our housing and dining needs for the summer program receive special consideration and frequently guide what is made available to other summer programs. And when we decided that the students should receive their official Stevens ID card when they arrived for the summer program, an ORL staff member always volunteers to be available on that first Sunday to take ID pictures and issue the ID cards.

ORL's support of the EOF program extends beyond the summer, continues throughout the academic year, and is reflective in the attitude and behavior of all the staff members – professional, administrative, and support. They keep us informed of any difficulties our students may be experiencing – academic or personal, questionable behaviors they may engage in the residence halls, problematic situations in which they may have found themselves, and make us privy to new and/or proposed housing and dining policies that would directly or indirectly impact our students. Additionally, sometimes they have deferred to us for our input when working with our students, and/or have accepted our recommendations for future action. Each academic year when the search for new Resident Assistants begins, the ORL staff contact us for referrals from among our students.

The EOF office and the Office of Residence Life maintain a cooperative, collaborative, and collegial relationship that undoubtedly has benefited the students. It has definitely helped us to serve our students effectively. Because of this positive working relationship, the EOF staff is never hesitant about contacting the Dean or her staff for advice, referrals, and with questions or concerns; the response is always timely and forthcoming. Indeed, a quick phone call is often all that is needed to obtain their assistance, whether it is to confer with a staff member, or meet with a student. For all of the above reasons, we believe the Dean and staff of the Office of Residence Life should be recognized as 2008 **EOF CHAMPIONS** of Stevens Institute of Technology.

Mr. Robert Earl Alston
The College of New Jersey

The Educational Opportunity Fund Program at The College of New Jersey is pleased to nominate **Mr. Robert Earl Alston** as our 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. Mr. Alston is currently the Associate Director of Student Financial Services, with the primary responsibility of administering the financial aid component of the Educational Opportunity Fund program.

An EOF alum, as well as a former EOF Program Specialist, Mr. Alston has worked diligently to ensure that the program's students' needs are met. From the initial program eligibility review, to developing a comprehensive financial aid package, to ensuring compliance, he is intricately involved in the administration of the program. Most significantly, he serves as a liaison with the New Jersey Commission on Higher Education, the New Jersey Higher Education Student Assistance Authority, and the federal government -- always advocating on behalf of EOF and its students.

As a former EOF student, he is especially aware of the difficulties that confront students both in and out of the classroom. As such, he has been especially skilled at identifying, articulating, and advocating on behalf of program participants. He serves as the primary administrator of the college's acclaimed "EOF Promise Award" initiative, which was established in 2004 and designed specifically to keep college affordable for the state's most financially needy population.

In addition, he presents financial aid workshops designed for our students both during the summer program and during the academic year. He developed an early warning and reminder system to alert students' parents to prepare for the submission of financial aid forms. As a result, there has been a significant decrease in the number of non-funded students. Also as impressive, he further extends himself presenting motivational workshops, as well as serving as a mentor.

He has been described as committed, compassionate, visionary, and professional. Without question, Mr. Robert Earl Alston has been an **EOF CHAMPION** in this past year and for every year since his enrollment as an EOF undergraduate.

Dr. Joseph J. Marchetti
The Richard Stockton College of NJ

The **EOF CHAMPION** for The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey for the 2008-2009 Academic year is **Dr. Joseph J. Marchetti**. There is no other individual more fitting to receive this **EOF CHAMPION** award on this momentous “2008 EOF Fall Conference and 40th Anniversary Celebration” than Dr. Joseph J. Marchetti.

Since 1985, Dr. Marchetti serves as Vice President for Student Affairs. In his role, Dr. Marchetti serves as senior administrator for all programs and services related to enrollment management, student records and registration, student services, campus life, and athletics and recreation and has successfully “main-streamed” the EOF program at the college. Prior to being named Vice President, he served as Associate Vice President where his responsibilities included providing general leadership of the division and coordinating all aspects of divisional assessment, professional development, budgeting and strategic planning. Between 1985 and 2000, he was the Dean of Students at Stockton, responsible for all student development and co-curricular life for approximately 7,000 undergraduate and graduate students.

Dr. Marchetti continues to serve as a catalyst for change and improvement. These improvements have transformed the program and the services that we provide to our students. Dr. Marchetti has continued to create a sense of urgency for addressing the increasing needs of the EOF student population here at the college and has had a significant impact on what the program has been able to accomplish within recent years.

Over the past several years, Dr. Marchetti has worked tirelessly to advocate for increased scholarship funds for EOF students through the Stockton College foundation. Dr. Marchetti also championed the effort to provide the program with additional staff to aid in bringing down the overall EOF student-to-staff ratio.

Finally, under Dr. Joseph Marchetti's leadership, the EOF program has continued to boast 3rd semester retention rates above 90% for the past several years. He continues to distinguish himself by advocating and striving to increase the levels of equity, diversity, and opportunity at The Richard Stockton College of New Jersey specifically within the Division of Student Affairs. Dr. Marchetti has been in a leadership role at the college since 1985 and has been a truly outstanding asset to the EOF community.

Dr. Thomas H. Brown
Union County College

We take great pleasure in nominating **Dr. Thomas H. Brown**, President of Union County College (UCC), as our 2008 **EOF CHAMPION**. Dr. Brown has served our institution with distinction and honor. Under his leadership and continuous commitment to the College's mission, Union County College has opened campuses in Elizabeth and Plainfield, expanded the McKay Library to include a third floor furnished with state of the art technology classrooms and is looking forward to the future expansion of the Elizabeth campus with an additional building.

Dr. Brown came to UCC in 1991 with knowledge and appreciation for the EOF program. He has demonstrated his interest and concern for the program through consistently advocating and supporting the academic achievements of our students. President Brown has demonstrated his commitment to EOF in many ways. For example, when space was needed to expand the program's tutorial services, he assisted with locating a new location for the center and providing the technology resources to equip it. In recognition of his support, the Chi Alpha Epsilon National Honor Society deemed him worthy to be inducted as one of its first honorary members. Today that center is a vibrant learning community for EOF students, peer tutors, and peer leaders.

Dr. Brown continues to demonstrate his dedication to the program by attending EOF graduation awards luncheons, honor society receptions, and by providing the additional resources needed to serve students on three campuses.

Selecting Dr. Brown as the **EOF CHAMPION** during the year that EOF celebrates its 40th Anniversary, and UCC its 75th, is our way of showing our appreciation and gratitude for his commitment and dedication to the students and the staff of the EOF program.

Professor Narciso Rodriguez
University of Medicine & Dentistry
School of Health Related Professions

The UMDNJ – School of Health Related Professions – Educational Opportunity Fund program’s **EOF CHAMPION** is **Professor Narciso Rodriguez**. Professor Rodriguez is a School of Health Related Professions EOF alum graduating in 1996 with an Associate degree from the jointly sponsored respiratory care program between UMDNJ and Essex County College, and completing a joint B.S. degree from UMDNJ and New Jersey City University in 2006. As a respiratory therapist, he holds the academic rank of full time professor at UMDNJ in the primary care department in the School of Health Related Professions. Currently, Professor Rodriguez serves as the Clinical Director for the respiratory therapy program.

His willingness to consistently assist our students and program whenever possible is commendable. As a role model and mentor, he understands the daily challenges our students face. He has developed a comfortable rapport with students and has stressed the importance of hard work, sacrifice, and determination to obtain your goals. For example, when asked to speak to our students about various health professions, Professor Rodriguez made adjustments to his clinical schedule in order to be there for our students. This is just one prime example of how he puts students first and constantly thinks about our students and their educational well-being. He is always willing to answer questions about his career in the health field and what type of classes students need to take before transferring to UMDNJ. The students are very fond of him because he genuinely cares about them and wants every student coming through our EOF program to succeed.

Professor Rodriguez is a true **EOF CHAMPION** and continues to set a great example by being one of many professional, caring, and dynamic EOF alums that our colleges and universities are producing.

Mrs. Rose Lynch
Warren County Community College

In recognition of her support, commitment, and dedication, Warren County Community College's EOF Program is honored to present **Mrs. Rose Lynch** as its **EOF CHAMPION** for 2008. Rose is a former Director of Financial Aid, who now works as the Director of Student Activities and is an extraordinary instructor of the Foundations for Success course. She teaches this course in the EOF Summer Program and during the regular semester.

Mrs. Lynch received a Bachelor's degree in Psychology from Centenary College and is currently pursuing a master's. She also supports the program as an EOF Group Counselor. Through her counseling sessions, she is able to identify and address student issues such as time and stress management, goal setting, and study habits. She is highly regarded by the students and genuinely has an interest in helping them stay motivated and focused on success.

It gives us great pleasure to present Mrs. Lynch with the **EOF CHAMPION** award for 2008.

Ms. Diane Ackerman
William Paterson University

The EOF staff and students of William Paterson University of New Jersey nominate **Diane Ackerman** as **EOF CHAMPION** for 2008. Diane Ackerman holds a Bachelors of Arts from William Paterson University. She is currently a Financial Aid Information Specialist at the University. Ms. Ackerman was appointed to the position of Assistant Director of Financial Aid at William Paterson in 1979. Since then, she has also served the University in the capacity of Interim Director in the 1990's as well as in 2007. Throughout her tenure in the Office of Financial Aid, she has demonstrated a true commitment to student success and retention. She has worked diligently to assist in the conceptualization and the implementation of two major financial aid conversion systems (SIS PLUS and Banner) which have augmented the efficacy of student services at William Paterson.

Despite the rigors and demands of her position, Ms. Ackerman remains an active advocate and resource to the EOF program and its students. She has had a pivotal role in revamping computer related systems such as the EOF web based book deferment process. This has enabled EOF staff to focus efforts on student services instead of manual review of student eligibility. In addition, Ms. Ackerman has actively assisted the EOF program with data tracking and report dissemination to better assist in accurate reporting and assessment. Further, she is a diligent and dedicated administrator who works tirelessly and quietly behind the scenes to assist students in resolving the daunting challenges of paying for a college education. Her dedication and tenacity in this regard has aided numerous EOF students who otherwise might not have remained at William Paterson. Ms. Ackerman is an empathetic visionary who has, throughout her university career, embraced her role in retaining students and assisting them in their quest for academic excellence and persistence to graduation. She truly exemplifies the ideals of an **EOF CHAMPION**.